HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MONROE STATION

HABS No. FL-544

Location: 50910 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee vicinity, Collier County, Florida

Present Owner: National Park Service, Big Cypress National Preserve

Present Occupants: Vacant

Present Use: Mothballed

Significance: Monroe Station has significance as one of two remaining police stations/motorist rest stops constructed along what was and, to a large extent remains, an undeveloped stretch of the Tamiami Trail in Collier County and Big Cypress National Preserve. As completed in 1928, the architecturally simple, two-story hip-roofed building exuded efficient (multi)functionality and resembled more a country store than the increasingly standardized and flashy gas stations appearing around the same time in metropolitan areas. The development company owned by capitalist and entrepreneur Barron Gift Collier built the stations as a necessary amenity for encouraging pleasant visitation to the rural county bearing his name. Between the county's establishment in 1923 and 1925, Collier spent upwards of one million dollars towards the completion of the Tamiami Trail, a roadway essential to making a monetary return on his vast acreage. Despite considerable change, Monroe Station remains one of few original roadside features along the Trail and—with a location at the Collier County intersection of two competing branches of the highway—is a unique touchstone to understanding the real estate and development frenzy that defined South Florida from the 1890s through the Great Depression.

Historian: James A. Jacobs

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. **Date of erection:** The Collier Company constructed Monroe Station and five others along the Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41) in Collier County, Florida, sometime between May and November 1928.

The Tamiami Trail was officially dedicated on April 25-27, 1928 with a motorcade from Tampa to Miami and celebrations along the way.[1] Copious amounts of press throughout South Florida reported on the event, chronicling even the most arcane of details about the roadway's planning and construction. No mention of any of the six stations—from west to east, Belle Meade, Royal Palm Hammock, Fahkahatchee (also known as "Weaver's Station"), Turner's River, Monroe, and Paolita—appeared in this coverage, suggesting that they were not even in the planning stages when the road opened, let alone constructed.[2] A photograph published in a March 1928 *Florida Highways* article about the Tamiami Trail depicts the site of the future station empty except for some small-scale camp buildings for the workers.[3]

As the stations were conceived to provide safety and services for motorists along the least populated stretch of the Trail, their need would not have been apparent or necessary before the road opened to the general public. On November 29, 1928, the *Collier County News* reported that they had been completed at "intervals of 10 to 12 miles" along the roadway in eastern Collier County.[4]

2. Architects: None known

3. Owners: Collier County is the second largest in land area in Florida, comprising approximately 2,025 square miles or 1,296,000 acres.[5] When Barron Gift Collier successfully lobbied the Florida state legislature to carve the jurisdiction from Lee County in 1923, it is estimated that he owned 900,000 acres or about 69 percent of the total.[6] Between 1923 and 1928, Barron Collier's backing allowed the new, mostly

[1] Tamiami Trail Commissioners and County Commissioners of Dade County, Florida, *History of the Tamiami Trail and a Brief Review of the Road Construction Movement in Florida* (Miami, 1928), 5-6. See also: "Tamiami Trail," *The Collier County News* [Everglades City] 26 Apr. 1928, souvenir edition, clipping in Vertical Files—"Tamiami Trail," Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami, Florida (hereafter *HMSF*)

[2] "Southwest Mounted Police Mark New Progress," *Collier County News* 22 Nov. 1928: 1. A photocopy of the article is located at the Collier County Museum, Naples, Florida (hereafter *CCM*). The article notes that S. M. Weaver was the first officer at the Fahkahatchee station. A 1950 highway map records the name of the station in the vicinity of the Fahkahatchee Strand, a linear cypress swamp typical of the area, as "Weaver's Station," perhaps after its first officer who may have stayed on at the station after the disbandment of the Southwest Mounted Police in 1934.

[3] "Where the Tamiami Trail divides," in "The Tamiami Trail," *Florida Highways* 5 (Mar. 1928): 8.

[4] Notice in the *Collier County News* 22 Nov. 1928, typed transcription entitled "Articles from the Collier County News" about the Southwest Mounted Police located at CCM.

[5] Collier County Government, "Population and Demographics," accessed online, 20 Mar. 2007, http://www.colliergov.net/.

[6] Charlton W. Tebeau, *Florida's Last Frontier* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1957), 85. Collier continued acquiring acreage after the county's establishment and owned over one-million acres by 1928, at least 77 percent of the total land area (Collier County Museums, "Fun Facts about Collier County History," accessed

undeveloped, and largely revenue-deficient county to issue bonds and time warrants amounting to over one-million dollars for the completion of the Tamiami Trail.[7] Aside from the extent of the acreage that Barron Collier owned, as a savvy businessman, he most likely constructed the unfinished section of the Tamiami Trail in eastern Collier County mostly on his own land, if not entirely. In 1928, Collier's development company built the six stations along a roadway that he in large part financed, in a county composed overwhelmingly by his own land holdings. It can be concluded, then, that Barron Collier or at least the Collier Company owned Monroe Station at the time of its completion.

By 1934, Collier County's Southwest Mounted Police had been disbanded, possibly due to Depression-related financial shortfalls, but more likely because in 1931 the governor charged the State Highway Department with enforcing traffic laws on state roads, leading to the creation of a "Division of Traffic Enforcement" early in 1934.[8] Despite vast wealth and business interests, about the same time Barron G. Collier was also experiencing negative pressure on his finances. These problems undoubtedly would have impacted his "Manhattan Mercantile Company," which in addition to land development oversaw commercial operations at the Tamiami Trail stations.[9] Worsening economic conditions also reduced the number of travelers along the Tamiami Trail.[10] All of these conditions hastened the permanent closure or sale of the six stations over the course of the decade. For example, the Collier Company is reported to have sold the Royal Palm Hammock Station to an independent proprietor in 1936.[11] Based on this information and a massive addition to the building loosely dated through fieldwork to just before World War II, it is likely that ownership of Monroe Station passed from Collier to someone else about the same time.

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online, 20 Mar. 2007, www.colliermuseum.com). Charlton Tebeau observed in a later book that Barron Collier owned "three-fourths of the land in the new county." See: Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1971), 380.

[7] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 23, for total expenditure. When the Florida State Road Department took over responsibility for completing the Tamiami Trail in about 1926, Collier County had already spent "approximately one million dollars." Minutes of the [Florida] Department of Transportation (formerly State Road Department), 1915-1997 (hereafter *MDT*), 6 Jul. 1926, MS S336, State Archives of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida.

[8] Tebeau, *Florida's Last Frontier*, 218, for financial cause; Florida Highway Patrol, "History of the Florida Highway Patrol, 1931-WWII, accessed online, 21 Mar. 2007, http://www.fhp.state.fl.us/html/story.html. See also: M[arie] A. Mayer, "For Your Information: Monroe Station," Aug. 2004, CCM.

[9] "Moratorium Given Failed Millionaire," *Washington Post* 16 Nov. 1933, 21; Lillian L. Weaver, "Postscript to 'Our Life in Collier Co., 1929-34'," *The Tamiami Trail: A Collection of Stories*, ed. Maria Stone (Naples, FL, 1998), 142, bound typescript in CCM, for Manhattan Mercantile Company involvement with the stations.

[10] The Turner's River Station had closed as early as April 1930 for this reason. See: "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM.

[11] "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM (handwritten entry on typescript dated 3 May 1995).

Although evidence points to a mid- to late-1930s transfer in ownership, initial deed research at the Collier County Courthouse under "Barron G. Collier" and the "Collier Company" yielded no related deeds. A search under the "State Road Department of Florida" was also unsuccessful.[12] The first located deed related specifically to Monroe Station, recorded February 9, 1961 documented the sale of the station and its contents by Ivan Rhodes to Keith and Ada King for $2500.00.[13] The amount of the sale did not reflect Monroe Station's true value as Rhodes and the Kings were business partners and this transaction was part of an agreement that included at least one other property.[14] This partnership provides a possible explanation for why it is not possible to trace the deeds back further than 1961—neither party appears in earlier records and they may have used a corporate name for prior transactions.

Not four months after the Kings settled with Rhodes, they sold the property to Hilton and Holly Arnold; however, Keith King recalled that "in eleven months she [Holly Arnold] called and wanted us to buy it back," which they did in October 1962.[15] Only Holly Arnold is listed on the second deed, perhaps indicating separation from or the death of her husband. Sometime later in the decade, Keith King sold Monroe Station to Dixie Webb, who in turn sold it to Joe Lord in 1972.[16]

National Park Service ownership

4. Original and subsequent occupants: The establishment of the Southwest Florida Mounted Police was an integral part of the creation of the six stations along the Tamiami Trail in Collier County. Husband-and-wife teams were hired to manage the stations, selling food, drinks, and gasoline to motorists, with the husband also "deputed by the county sheriff" ostensibly "not so much [to] arrest lawbreakers as to aid motorists in

[12] In 1935, the State Road Department more formally outlined the process by which "the several counties of the State through which State roads pass" would work with officials in acquiring and transferring ownership of transportation rights-of-way to the State Road Department (MDT, 28 Jan. 1935). A deed of 20 Jul. 1938 between Barron and Juliet Carnes Collier and the State Road Department for a right-of-way along was then called State Road 27-A (County Road 92) running between Marco Island and the Tamiami Trail included land for fifty feet to either side of the roadway (Deed, Barron Collier and Juliet Carnes Collier to State Road Department of Florida, recorded 20 Jul. 1938, Deed Book 8, 476, Collier County Courthouse, Naples, Florida). A similar right-of-way would have had to been negotiated for the Tamiami Trail. Neither initial deed research nor the minutes of the State Road Department revealed when this occurred; however, it may have been brokered at the time the state took over construction of the Trail around 1926.

[13] Deed, Ivan Rhodes to Keith and Ada King, recorded 9 Feb. 1961, Official Records (OR) 78, 433, Collier County Courthouse, Naples, Florida (hereafter *CCC*).

[14] Keith King, "The Indians of Monroe Station I Knew," *The Tamiami Trail: A Collection of Stories*," ed. Maria Stone (Naples, FL, 1998): 127, bound typescript in CCM.

[15] King, 127, for quote; Deed, Keith D. King to Hilton and Holly Arnold, recorded 1 Jun. 1961, OR 85, 451, CCC; Holly Arnold to Keith D. King, recorded 31 Oct. 1962, OR 123, 478, CCC.

[16] Christopher Lane, "Monroe Station: Outpost of 5 plus Joe Lord," "Special to the [Miami] *Herald*" ca. 1980.

difficulty," but the remoteness of the station locations still resulted in tense confrontations.[17] It was expected that once an hour during daylight hours, each officer would mount his Harley Davidson motorcycle and patrol the fives miles of roadway to either side of each station.[18] William Irwin was the first officer to occupy Monroe Station. Beginning in November 1928, he worked out of the station and was presumably accompanied by his wife, Nettie, and two children.[19] Officer Irwin's tenure was short. He was killed on January 19, 1929, in a head-on collision while patrolling on his motorcycle.[20]

The Collier County Sheriff's Office appointed William J. Weaver as Irwin's replacement on January 24, 1929.[21] Officer Weaver's wife, Lillian, and his two daughters joined him at Monroe Station by the middle of February.[22] Except for a few months in the winter of 1929-30, the Weavers remained at Monroe Station until January 1932, occasionally with family visiting family members or other "helpers."[23] Lillian Weaver recalled that when they left a woman named Bertha and her daughter Mary Lee were assisting them when they departed early in 1932, adding: "Bertha then married Earl McGill and they took over the station when we left."[24] It is not known how long the McGills remained at Monroe

[17] Tebeau, 218; "The Pioneer," *Naples Daily News* 26 Apr. 1998, sec. G: 6.

[18] Florence Thomasson, Barron Collier's secretary around the time of the establishment of the South West Mounted Police, claims to have purchased the uniforms for the officers at a New York city costume house. They had purportedly been used in a production of "The Northwest Mounties" and resembled the famous uniforms worn by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Scott Dyer, "The Trail Turns 60: Trail Had Heavy Impact on Region, Rest of State," *Naples Daily News* 24 Apr. 1988, sec. A: 16, and Mary Armbruster, "Florence Thomason: Florida Beauty Queen and Collier's Gal Friday," untitled and undated newspaper article, both in "Southwest Florida Mounted Police" folder, CCM.

[19] "Southwest Mounted Police Mark New Progress," for Irwin's name. See transcription, "Articles from the Collier County News," for mention of husband-and-wife teams at other Tamiami Trail stations.

[20] "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM, and Lt. Tom Smith, "Additions to the Collier County Sheriff's Office—'Line of Duty Death Roster'," April 2001, Collier County Sheriff's Office, Naples, Florida. The author would like to thank Lt. Smith for generously sharing research notes related to the Southwest Mounted Police.

[21] "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM.

[22] Lillian Larkens Weaver, "Our Life in Collier County, January 1929 through February, 1934," *The Tamiami Trail: A Collection of Stories*, ed. Maria Stone (Naples, FL, 1998), 130-36, bound typescript in CCM. For a published article about Weaver's reflections, see: "The Pioneer," *Naples Daily News* 26 Apr. 1998, sec. G: 6.

[23] The *Collier County News* reported in November 1929 that "Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Johnson, of Miami" were replacing the Weavers at Monroe Station because William Weaver had taken a job with the Miami Beach police. Lillian Weaver commented that "we spent a couple of months in Miami that winter of 1929 and 1930;" however, they returned to Monroe Station after "Uncle Lem Duncan again came down from Illinois with his son this time." It seems from this information that William Weaver may have only been filling in for his uncle, who was also an officer, temporarily. "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM; Weaver, "Our Life," 134.

[24] Weaver, "Postscript," 146.

Station, although unless they later purchased the station—for which there is presently no evidence—they likely departed with the disbandment of the Southwest Florida Mounted Police in 1934. At this time, no people can be associated with Monroe Station until 1960.

Keith King and his family moved to Monroe Station on September 1, 1960, and stayed there until sometime around May 30, 1961 when they sold the "service station" to Milton and Holly Arnold.[25] The Arnolds only lived there for about five months before selling it back to the Kings in October 1961.[26] The Kings remained at the station for a few years before selling it to Dixie Webb.[27]

After 1970, Dixie Webb "only spen[t] long weekends—from Friday night through Sunday—at his Monroe Station;" his manager, "Dynamite," lived there full time from 1970 until at least 1972.[28]

Dixie Webb sold Monroe Station to "Big Joe" and Susie Lord who lived there until the early 1990s after which the National Park Service acquired the building and sealed it until damage from Hurricane Wilma required a decision about its future.[29] The National Park Service is planning for restoration and interpretation of the building.

5. Builder, suppliers: The "Collier Company," a development firm established by Barron G. Collier, constructed the original six stations. A 1923 essay entitled "The Truth about Collier County" noted that sometime between 1921 and 1923, Collier built a "2 x 4 sawmill" on what is now the Barron River (formerly "Allen") in what is now called "Everglades City."[30] This company sawmill could very well have provided the lumber

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[25] King, 127, for King arrival; Deed, King to Arnold, 30 May 1961, for King departure.

[26] King, 127, and Deed, Arnold to King, 31 Oct. 1961, for Arnold departure.

[27] King, 127.

[28] Charles Willeford, "On the Trail with Dixie Webb," *Tropic* (*Miami Herald* Sunday magazine) 23 Apr. 1972: 22.

[29] Lane, "Monroe Station," for purchase; "Wilma Hastens Revival for Roadside Relic," *Naples Daily News* 27 Nov. 2005, sec. A: 1; "Refurbishment: A Big Yes!," *Naples Daily News* 4 Dec. 2005, sec. G: 2. Clippings in "Tamiami Trail: Monroe Station" folder, CCM.

[30] [James Franklin Jaudon, attrib.], "The Truth about Collier County," 1923, Papers of James Franklin Jaudon (hereafter Jaudon), HMSF, item available online at Library of Congress, American Memory, "Reclaiming the Everglades," http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/everglades/. Over time and between sources the names "Everglade," "Everglades," and "Everglades City" have been affixed to the same location. In general, "Everglade" is the name associated with the place before 1923 and "Everglades" was put into use by Barron Collier after it was named the first seat of Collier County in 1923. "Everglades City" superseded "Everglades" at least since the jurisdiction's incorporation in 1953.

for construction of the stations. No other information about the builder or suppliers is known at this time.

6. Original plans and construction: Little evidence survives recording the Collier Company's design and construction of the six service/police stations along the Tamiami Trail during the latter half of 1928; however, extant building fabric, a handful of historic documents, and reminiscences of one of early resident provide insight on Monroe Station as originally completed.

Except for the hamlet of Ochopee—known for having the smallest Post Office in the United States—very little development exists today along the Tamiami Trail within Big Cypress National Preserve. It is not hard to imagine how daunting this stretch of the road might have seemed to motorists at the time of the Trail's completion in 1928. Many period highway maps did not bother labeling much of anything between Naples and Miami except for Everglades City, then the county seat and seat of Barron Collier's Floridian empire. A 1936 map depicted nothing between Carnestown located at the junction of the Tamiami Trail and the road connecting south to Everglades City and Monroe Station, having a high-profile location at the "split" in the Tamiami Trail.[31] To assuage legitimate concerns about running out of gas, receiving assistance in the event of an accident, and finding restroom facilities in addition to "lesser" needs of food and drink, the Collier Company oversaw construction of the six original stations. While seemingly altruistic in concept, as the owner of approximately three-quarters of the land in Collier County, Barron Collier had deep economic interests not only in bringing people there—via the newly completed Tamiami Trail—but also in making the trip as pleasant as possible. Without the stations, Collier County might have appeared despairingly undeveloped to coastal Floridians and have negatively impacted Collier's schemes for development.

"Patrol stations have been built," so reported the *Collier County News* on November 22, 1928, "...where gas, oil, soft drinks, accessories and other requirements may be had."[32] Although by necessity multifunctional, as originally constructed Monroe Station was a relatively modest structure. The main portion of the frame building measured approximately 13' x 24' and contained two stories under a shallow hip-roof with bracketed eaves. Lillian Weaver, an early occupant of Monroe, recalled thinking that the "the building was so tall and narrow we were afraid to stay in it during a storm."[33] At the south (rear) side of the building, a one-story, shed-roofed assemblage extended outward approximately six feet for its entire width, overshooting the west wall and incorporated

[31] Florida State Road Department, "Official Road Map of Florida," 1936, State Archives of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida. For more information on the significance of the "split," see Section II:B "Historical Context"

[32] "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM.

[33] Weaver, "Our Life," 131.

into the structure and sheathing of the exterior stair.[34] On the north side, facing the Tamiami Trail, a flat-roofed canopy large enough for a car to pass under extended fully across most of the station's front. Three vertical posts with cross braces supported the end of the canopy. Given the warm, subtropical climate, this protected outdoor space was likely intended as much for human use as automobiles. Lillian Weaver recalled: "the driveway under roof was pebble rocked and we'd close the drive and use it as a patio during hot summer days and little traffic."[35] Even with the double-hung windows on the second floor (four front-facing, at least one rear-facing in addition to the exterior door, and one on each of the lateral walls), the living quarters would have gotten quite close in the summer. A pair of large openings on the first floor, each fitted with doors and windows opening onto the covered portion of the drive, established an indoor-outdoor quality to the public areas of the station.

Historic photographs provide documentation of Monroe Station's early appearance; unfortunately, a lack of corresponding interior views and the loss of building fabric disallow making solid conclusions about the original disposition of spaces. The functional needs for the stations meant that the Collier Company likely planned the modest structures with husband-and-wife teams in mind.[36] The remote locations required that they include living quarters for the proprietor of the store and the mounted (motorcycled) police officer in addition to commercial space and rest rooms. Related individuals were probably the easiest solution as they provided for the type of companionship desirable in what essentially was a homesteading type of settlement and gave a "family friendly" face to people visiting (and potentially relocating to) Collier County.

The reminiscences of Lillian Larkens Weaver give some idea of how Monroe Station operated in its earliest days.[37] Weaver's husband, William, replaced Officer William Irwin at Monroe on January 24, 1929 after Irwin's death in a head-on collision while on patrol. Weaver recalled that "the station had two rooms and two restrooms with a small storage room downstairs." One of the rooms contained a counter and merchandise

[34] Two similar photographs of Monroe Station in its earliest days exist. The views are taken from the drive looking southeast, in both cases capturing the odd shed-stair construction. A third historic view of the Royal Palm Hammock Station taken from another direction suggests that the shed ran entirely across the back of the stations as originally constructed. One photograph is at the Collier County Museum....where is the other from?

[35] Weaver, "Our Life," 130.

[36] For example, the *Collier County News* reported in its 20 December 1928 issue: "Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Hampton have been appointed to succeed Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Richardson at Paolita station on the Tamiami Trail." "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM.

[37] Unless otherwise noted, all information about the Weaver occupation of Monroe Station (1929-ca. 1932) is drawn from: Lillian Larkens Weaver, "Our Life in Collier County, January 1929 through February, 1934," and Lillian L. Weaver, "Postscript to 'Our Life in Collier Co., 1929-34'," both in *The Tamiami Trail: A Collection of Stories*, ed. Maria Stone (Naples, FL, 1998), 130-36 and 140-151, respectively, bound typescript in CCM.

shelving, and the other may have acted as a sort of vestibule for the rest rooms, which, unlike later in Monroe Station's history, opened on the inside.[38] The apartment on the upper level was also divided into two major spaces—a bedroom and "living/dining room" with an associated "bath" and "small kitchen." Physical evidence suggest the level was divided in half, with the living/dining/kitchen functions on the western half and the bedroom/bath on the eastern. A Fairbanks-Morse home electric plant pumped the water and, as noted by Lillian Weaver, "furnished our lights by direct current." Powered on kerosene, this type of generator was common for rural areas that were not serviced by central electric plants. A 1926 Fairbanks-Morse catalog whimsically captioned their cover illustration, which depicted an evening lawn party at a blazing farmstead with electrified Japanese lanterns strung around, "City Life in the Country."[39] With indoor plumbing, sewerage, and electricity, Monroe Station was an entirely up-to-date building; within the Weavers' period of occupancy (1929-32), they even had the luxury of a telephone.

Although it is not evident in historic photos nor referred to in Lillian Weaver's reminiscences, it is entirely plausible that the storage shed located behind the station on the south side of the covered walkway extending across the back of the building is an original or early site feature. The storage shed is a single-story, gable-roofed structure with a low attic once lighted by windows in the front (north) and rear (south) gables. The wood framing and knob-and-tube wiring that survives in the attic suggests and early construction date, perhaps one that even predates Monroe Station itself. An historic photograph of "rolling bunkhouses" used to house work crews constructing the Tamiami Trail captured structures with similar framing, dimensions, and orientation as the storage shed.[40] Perhaps even more convincing, an image accompanying a 1928 article in *Florida Highways* marking the approaching end of construction on the Tamiami Trail is captioned "Where the Tamiami Trail Divides" and shows the future site of Monroe Station at center.[41] Four or five bunkhouse structures sit adjacent to what became the South Loop of the Tamiami Trail, placing them on the site where Monroe Station would be constructed later in the year.

7. Alterations and additions:

Late-1930s—The Weavers departed Monroe Station for Everglades City early in 1932

[38] An historic photograph of Monroe Station captured a sign near the door stating: "Rest Rooms Inside." See question in n31 about location.

[39] Fairbanks, Morse & Co., *Fairbanks-Morse Home Electric Light and Power Plants* (Chicago, 1926).

[40] For reproductions of the photos, see; Doris Davis, "The Tamiami Trail—Muck, Mosquitoes, and Motorists: A Photo Essay," *Tampa Bay History* 1 (Fall/Winter 1979): 19, for reproduction image.

[41] "Where the Tamiami Trail divides," in "The Tamiami Trail," *Florida Highways* 5 (Mar. 1928): 8.

and the Southwest Mounted Police ceased to exist by 1934.[42] Evidence suggests that the financially struggling Collier Company sold the Royal Palm Hammock Station to an independent proprietor in 1936 and it is likely that it divested itself of Monroe Station around the same time.[43] A change in ownership around this time would be consistent with the probable construction date of the massive addition to the south and east of the original building.

Despite a lack of documentary evidence, onsite fieldwork has still provided a reasonably solid understanding of the stages in which the building was expanded. This first addition was the one that wholly changed the presence of the station and created the building as it essentially stands today. The work comprised a two-story, gable-roofed extension to the south, approximately tripling its size, as well as a one-story, shed-roofed extension to the east. Uniform roof framing in the attic confirms the extent of the two-story addition at this time. The overall dimensions, arrangement of north (front) elevation openings, and the fact that the exterior clapboards meeting at the point where the one-story and two-story extensions intersect are neatly cut and finished indicate that the one-story section to the east was also part of this construction campaign.

On the first floor, the additions created a much more spacious public area at the front of the station and a large kitchen at the rear—suggesting that Monroe Station likely added a restaurant to its offering of traveler amenities at this time. A new stair to the second story rose upwards to the north along the east wall of the kitchen, as indicated by paint ghosts and later plywood infill for the opening. The second floor was divided into two major rooms—the original upper story and a large rear room with built-in closets. The two rooms were divided by an L-shaped passage starting at the top of the stair, crossing the entire building, and terminating at the bathroom situated along the west wall at the approximate location of the entry porch for the upper floor in the original building. It appears that the front and rear rooms were conceived as independent living spaces, with the room at the front served by the interior stair and the one at the rear by an external stair servicing a small porch onto which the door in the southeast corner of the room opened. It is possible that at this time the entire east wall on the second floor to the south of the original structure was open, but still sheltered by the roof.

For both physical reasons and functional needs, the two restrooms (men's on the north, women's on the south) located at the southwest corner of the first floor most likely date to this period; however, they seem to have been constructed after the one-story shed addition. The north wall of the men's room is sheathed in beaded clapboards used elsewhere only on the exterior—interior partitions are mostly composed of tightly fitted tongue-and-groove boards—and similar boarding is evident on its west wall above the dropped ceiling. As constructed, the restrooms were accessible from the outside, unlike

[42] See I:A:3 "Owners," for more information on ownership and operation of Monroe Station in the 1930s.

[43] "Articles from the Collier County News," CCM (handwritten entry on typescript dated 3 May 1995).

the original ones, which were located inside the station. Increased traffic on the Tamiami Trail likely made exterior restrooms desirable to the proprietors of Monroe Station.

Ca. 1957—As originally constructed, the Tamiami Trail was 30' from shoulder to shoulder and mostly paved at a width of 20', although some areas of western Collier County were only paved to 19'.[44] Increased traffic after World War II and rising standards for minimum road construction, influenced especially by the proposal and 1956 authorization of the Interstate Highway System, made the formerly wondrous Tamiami Trail seem deficient to many drivers, road engineers, and politicians. In 1951, a representative for Collier County at the annual budget requests with the Florida Department of Transportation expressed that the county "would like to have a 24' road all the way on the Tamiami Trail."[45] Despite growing momentum for such a project, ongoing discussion about widening the Trail was not fully favorable. In 1956, representatives of the Tamiami Trail Association presented a petition with "more than two hundred names" to the Department of Transportation "asking that the present location of the Tamiami Trail be retained and that it not be changed in any manner."[46] It was all for naught. Only one year later U. S. 41 was widened, which precipitated the southward movement of Monroe Station away from the roadway on June 21, 1957.[47] It was reported the following year that "Collier County today has reconstructed

[44] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 24. In March 1928, an article in *Florida Highways* incorrectly described the Tamiami Trail in total as "a standard 40-foot highway." Although portions of the Trail nearer the coasts and in such cities as Miami, Fort Myers, and Tampa perhaps met this standard, the sections in the backcountry parts of Dade and Collier counties were not as wide. Horace A. Dunn, "The Tamiami Trail," *Florida Highways* 5 (Mar. 1928): 1.

[45] MDT, 16 Jan. 1951.

[46] MDT, 31 May-3 Oct. 1956. This plea came only after the decorative stone arch built by Collier County at the Dade-Collier county line in preparation for the widening. A 1956 *Miami Herald* notice about the demolition remarked that it was coming down for a "Trail widening program" and went on to state: "There's no money in the budget for rebuilding it." A similar archway over the Trail at the Collier-Lee line was also lost around this time. "Take a Last Look," *Miami Herald* 6 Apr. 1956, clipping in Vertical Files—"Tamiami Trail," HMSF, and Carrie Scupholm, "Connecting the East and the West Coasts: The Tamiami Trail of the Sunshine State," in *Looking Beyond the Highway: Dixie Roads and Culture*, ed. Claudette Stager and Martha Carver (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 79.

[47] Mayer, "For Your Information," CCM, for exact date. Only a year later the *Miami Herald* reported that the "Tamiami Trail...is only half-built for modern traffic. It should be a four-lane limited-access highway," a not surprising suggestion at the dawn of the Interstate Highway System. A decade later writers at the *Miami Herald* were still calling for its widening. One South Florida journalist observed in 1967 that with four lanes on the Tamiami Trail from Miami to Naples "travelers could enjoy the spectacle of the primitive Everglades with less concern for their lives." The Tamiami Trail was never again enlarged to any great extent; however, the Everglades Parkway or "Alligator Alley," which has paralleled the Trail approximately twenty miles to the north since its completion in 1969, was increased to four lanes between 1986 and 1992. See: "Tamiami Trail Only Half-Built," *Miami Herald* 21 Apr. 1958, sec. A: 6, and John Pennekamp, "Put Trail, Overseas Highway on U.S. List," *Miami Herald* 10 Mar. 1967: np, both in Vertical Files—"Tamiami Trail," HMSF.

approximately 42 miles of the Tamiami Trail with roads and bridges 24 feet wide and shoulders 12 feet."[48]

The final period of comparatively minor changes that are still evident at Monroe Station undoubtedly occurred in the wake of the building's relocation, although some—such as the no longer extant one-story shed additions to the east and west of the restaurant dining room—probably dated from even later. Except for construction of an interior passage leading from the dining room to the bathrooms and the removal of the interior stair in the kitchen, the first floor appears to have been altered very little. It is likely that the present covered walkway and, with the exception of the rolling barracks-turned-shed, related storage areas all postdate the 1957 move.

If the east wall on the second floor had originally been open, it was enclosed at this time and jalousie windows installed for ventilation. With the closure of the interior stair, the space now functioned as a passage from the new exterior stairs and apartment door in the southwest corner of the building. At the same time, the passage was also interrupted by the insertion of a large closet opening onto the historic second story space, which blocked direct access to the bathroom from the passage. In the front (historic) room, paneling, acoustical tile, and flush sliding closet doors contributed to an up-to-date and unified decorative scheme echoed in a completely renovated bathroom. Aside from jalousie replacement units for the south-facing windows, no changes appear to have been made to the rear room. With the exception of the later one-story shed additions to the east and west of the dining room, which were lost due to damage from Hurricane Wilma, Monroe Station has remained visually unchanged during its last three decades.

B. Historical Context

The Tamiami Trail: An Early American Highway

> The linking of the road will mark victory for road builders and engineers who were scorned in their early attempts to conquer the vast wilderness of the Florida Everglades, for the trail...penetrates the very heart of America's last frontier [1928].[49]

Monroe Station exists solely because of the Tamiami Trail. Although technically only the informal name for the road opened in 1928 as "State Road 27"—and "U. S. 41" and "U. S. 94" depending on which stretch—the moniker "Tamiami Trail" has been in use since the road's inception—a contraction of Tampa-Miami, the cities that the "cross state road" was intended to

[48] "Clerk Ed Scott Recalls Details of Early Road Construction," *Collier County News* 5 Jun. 1958, 1, Collier-Seminole State Park files, Naples, Florida.

[49] Dunn, 1.

connect.[50] The concept for building the Tamiami Trail grew out of two principal conditions: a national fervor about highway building and the rapid settlement and development of Florida, which had been growing progressively in intensity and scope since the end of the nineteenth century.

In the 1910s, efforts aimed at linking the nation with long-distance roads intended for automobile travel gained significant momentum as the "Good Roads Movement" led to the establishment of the "American Association for Highway Improvement," which became the "American Highway Association" in 1912.[51] The "named trails" were a nationwide trend in which "boosters selected a route over existing—often, just barely existing—roads, gave it a colorful name, formed an association to promote the trail, and collected dues from businesses and towns along the way."[52] The most iconic of these is the "Lincoln Highway." Conceived in 1912 by Carl Fisher—builder of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway—the Lincoln Highway would connect New York and San Francisco by 1915, the year in of the Panama-Pacific Exposition.

The roadway generated much fanfare and interest, but lingering issues about its official route and, most of all, limited funding for the endeavor meant that the project languished into the 1920s and the highway was not fully paved until 1935.[53] Although the longest highway in the United States (still, at 3,385 miles), the type of boosterism Fisher and others generated for the Lincoln Highway was fast becoming anachronistic. One Fisher biographer observed: "he appeared more in tune with entrepreneurs who envisioned the automobile as a recreational and leisure device. Fisher was no populist, and neither were his associates in the Lincoln Highway Association."[54] Yet, even while he was promoting the Lincoln Highway with elite drivers in mind, he was already expanding his understanding of the increasing value of well-constructed and located roadways with the invention of the "Dixie Highway"

[50] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 8-9, for its coinage in 1915. A newspaper article appearing in the *Miami Metropolis* sometime in 1916 announced that "work on the Tamiami Trail and on the Miami canal road will begin in a few days." "The Tamiami Trail," *Miami Metropolis* nd [1916], Vertical Files—"Tamiami Trail," HMSF. In the 1940s, Florida ceased using signs for "S.R. 27" along the Tamiami Trail and "U. S. 41" was adopted for its entire length between Tampa and Miami.

[51] William Kaszynski, *The American Highway: The History and Culture of Roads in the United States* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2000), 35.

[52] Richard F. Weingroff, Federal Highway Administration, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U. S. Numbered Highway System," AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) Quarterly 76 (Spring 1997), accessed online, 1 May 2007, http://wwwcf.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/numbers.htm.

[53] Kaszynski, 38.

[54] Mark S. Fisher, *Castles in the Sand: The Life and Times of Carl Graham Fisher* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 113-114.

Florida's earliest major named trail (launched 1914) was the Dixie Highway, which extended from the Michigan southward to a terminus in Miami. Again, Carl Fisher was the driving force behind the road, but conditions made his involvement and the larger purpose of the road distinct from what came earlier. Fisher became invested in a "boulevard" from "Mackinac to Miami" after he provided the capital to Miami area landowner John Collins to complete the two-and-one-half-mile-long automobile bridge across Biscayne Bay to what soon became Miami Beach.[55] In return, Fisher received considerable acreage around the terminus of the bridge extending between the bay and the ocean. He saw the Dixie Highway as a wholly commercial venture as the primary means for encouraging visitation and settlement on his land holdings.[56]

Where the Lincoln Highway had been initially funded almost solely by private investment, from the start Fisher courted state politicians for the Dixie Highway.[57] The 1914 establishment of the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO, later changed to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, or AASHTO) and the passage of the "Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916" changed the landscape of highway planning in the United States. By providing a forum for state-level officials, AASHO allowed for more comprehensive highway planning, and the Federal-Aid Road Act provided the first regular source federal funds for road construction funded through a national gasoline tax.[58] Available federal monies for highways expanded considerably again five years later with the passage of the "Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1921." In *Divided Highways* (1997), historian Tom Lewis observed: "in its 1916 Federal-Aid Road Act, Congress funded the federal road program with $75 million for five years; in its 1921 Federal-Aid Highway Act, it funded federal roads with an average of $75 million a *year*."[59] The nationalization of highway planning and funding was a great spur to the completion of long-distance roadways like the Lincoln and Dixie highways.

As with the Lincoln Highway, backers of the Dixie Highway became quickly preoccupied with the establishing the route and fell into two basic camps: those wanting the most direct connection and those rather having the roadway meander through major cities, towns, and points of interest.[60] After much deliberation, compromise plans for the Dixie Highway included two routes in Florida on approach to Miami: an easterly one hugging the Atlantic coast and a westerly one through the center of the state, jogging to the southwest from Orlando to Marco

[55]Ibid., 135, for quote.

[56] Claudette Stager, "Introduction," in *Looking Beyond the Highway: Dixie Roads and Culture*, ed. Claudette Stager and Martha Carver (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), xiii.

[57] Fisher, 121.

[58] Kaszynski, 52.

[59] Tom Lewis, *Divided Highways: Building the Interstate Highways, Transforming American Life* (New York: Viking, 1999), 18.

[60] Ibid., 42.

before heading east to Miami along the Tamiami Trail.[61] Although in the larger picture considered part of the western stretch of Dixie Highway in Florida, the Tamiami Trail has an independent and colorful history dating to its conceptual stages and even after completion retained an identity of its own.[62]

From its launch in 1915 to its dedication in 1928, the building of the Tamiami Trail occurred during a not unrelated boom period for Florida real estate, and the impetus for its realization—to sell land for residential and agricultural uses and to encourage tourism—cannot be entirely isolated from other contemporary road construction in the state.[63] The type of sentiment expressed by the *Miami Metropolis* in 1916 was widespread and sustained interest in and energy for the project over the thirteen years the project dragged on:

> The *Metropolis* is prone to believe that the greatest value of the cross state road will be in the good 'neighbors' it will make of the lower East and West Coasts, and of the interior towns in South Florida which are now inaccessible to Miami. Of course the Tamiami Trail is going to open up a vast territory of rich farming lands…'below the frost line'…All of this will bring more settlers to South Florida and increase the wealth of the entire state.[64]

Still, the Trail's construction stands apart from most other road construction both in Florida and elsewhere in the country because it's route traversed what was considered by many to be a "frontier."[65] A 1928 history of the Trail observed that along the route of road between Fort Myers and Miami "there was not a single house" and before 1915 the area was "almost unexplored."[66] Sixty years later an article in the an article in the *South Florida History Magazine* stated: "the Everglades in 1923, although not quite virgin wilderness, was not far removed from that category."[67] It should be noted that the area was not entirely depopulated as roughly 400 Miccosukees lived in thatched chickees on hammocks (areas raised land) scattered

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[61] For more information on the Dixie Highway in Florida and elsewhere, see the essays in: *Looking Beyond the Highway: Dixie Roads and Culture*, ed. Claudette Stager and Martha Carver (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006).

[62] As noted in Scupholm, 73.

[63] William Kaszynski observes that the first stirrings of the "Good Roads Movement" in southern states focused on "pressing state governments for the funds for local farm-to-market roads" (42).

[64] "The Tamiami Trail," *Miami Metropolis* nd [1916].

[65] In 1928, Horace A. Dunn referred to the Everglades, an area that at the time included the Big Cypress swamp to the west, as "America's last frontier" (Dunn, 1). With a bit less drama, Charlton W. Tebeau titled his 1957 history of Collier County *Florida's Last Frontier*.

[66] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 3.

[67] Steve Glassman, "Blazing the Tamiami Trail," *South Florida History Magazine* 1 (Winter 1989): 4.

throughout the cypress swamps and Everglades.[68] The difficulty of the terrain and lack of modern development positions the opening of South Florida's interior with the Tamiami Trail in a settlement context as much like that for the building of Florida's coastal railroads in the 1880s and 1890s as for the state's real estate frenzy and associated road-building campaigns of the 1910s and 1920s.

Because of the terrain, the amount of engineering and labor necessary for the construction of the Tamiami Trail—in particular the section between Marco and Miami—is distinct from the development of most other contemporary highways. The named trails and early highways usually comprised a patchwork of established routes, carriage tracks, and country roads that, while generally needing a good deal of improvement for use by automobiles, were already cut through the landscape.[69] The Tamiami Trail would not only have to be driven through an as-yet-uncleared landscape but one in which large portions were frequently under water. To remain dry at all times, a roadbed through the area would have to be raised and the water adequately drained off—goals that could both be reached by building canals. The *Miami Realtor* reported on the arduous process of completing the Tamiami Trail in 1926, stating:

> The first process in construction of the highway is removing the muck (partially decayed vegetable matter which has accumulated in the water for many centuries) which runs as much as six feet deep…the canal is then filled in with rock blasted and scooped from a similar canal dug alongside…the canals carry off the surplus water caused by rains [and] the spoil banks thrown up when the material is dredged from the canals is used for road building.[70]

The raised roadbed and associated canal defined the Tamiami Trail for its entire length between Naples and Miami, and required so much blasting that during the last two years of construction Florida became the third largest consumer of "the ordinary grades of dynamite" among all states.[71] The ramped-up construction along the Tamiami Trail at this time occurred in large part because the State Road Department at last took on responsibility for completing the highway.

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[68] Douglas Waitley, *Roadside History of Florida* (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1997), 188.

[69] Weingroff, *From Names to Numbers*.

[70] Leonard A. Slye, "The Tamiami Trail: Real Beginning of Reclamation Work in Everglades West of Miami," *The Miami Realtor* (1926), clipping in "Papers Relating to the Tamiami Trail Construction, 1926," Jaudon, HMSF. A digitized copy of this source is available online at "American Memory" on the Library of Congress website (www.loc.gov), under collection the collection title: "Reclaiming the Everglades: South Florida's Natural History, 1884-1934."

[71] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 22, for dynamite. From the standpoint of engineering, the Tamiami Trial and its canal were an unparalleled success. The American Society of Civil Engineers named the Trail "An Engineering Wonder" in 1955. Four decades later, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers recognized the "Bay City Walking Dredge No. 489" as a "National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark." Dredge No. 489 was "used to dredge roadbed fill material for the Tamiami Trail" and, built in 1924, it "is the earliest known survivor of its type. Designed for use over swampy terrain where wheeled or tracked vehicles would bog down, the machine

Created in 1915, the State Road Department was established in the same year that the Dixie Highway construction began and the idea for the Tamiami Trail was proposed. Although it took a couple of years to set clear priorities, the department seal adopted upon its establishment gives some indication of its projected direction. The seal depicted Florida's roads of "yesterday" as mud tracks still choked with undergrowth—although strangely bounded by arrow-straight rows of palm trees—and those of "tomorrow" smooth, flat, and extending into the horizon (fig.).[72] Within a year, the chairman was able verbalize a mission, stating:

> investigations [over the past year] have but strengthened my conviction that the greatest need of our State in road construction, is Trunk Highways, which might be classed as Interstate Roads, with laterals across the State from the Gulf of Mexico to Georgia and from the Gulf to the Atlantic, and connecting county seats and points of importance, forming a system of inter-county roads...In such a road every county of the State is vitally interested, and the thoughtful road builders of the State are demanding the construction and maintenance of such highways.[73]

The state legislature rechartered the department in 1917 giving it the authority to "establish a state and state-aid system of roads" and oversee the various activities necessary to meet this goal.[74] As before, this system was seen to depend on trunk roads and the department's principal concern in 1919 was bridging the "unimproved gaps" along them.[75]

At the time, no "gap" in South Florida's anticipated road system was less improved than the section of the Tamiami trail east of Everglade (later Everglades City) in what was then Lee County into western Dade County (fig.). In 1923, Miami had only a single land connection to the rest of the state—both the Dixie Highway and the railroad hugged the coastline from Miami north to Jacksonville.[76] Despite the obvious difficulties in completing this segment of the road, the state saw value in linking Miami with the west coast. Beginning in 1923, the state officially

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distributed its weight over shoes." American Society of Mechanical Engineers, dedication of "Bay City Walking Dredge No. 489," Feb. 19, 1994, Collier-Seminole State Park, Naples, Florida, copy located in the Collier-Seminole State Park files. From an environmental position, the "damlike raised structure" of the roadbed" have "very significant hydrologic implications" because they interrupt the natural flow of water. Michael J. Duever, et al, "The Big Cypress National Preserve, Research Report No. 8 of the National Audubon Society" (1979) (New York, 1986), 246.

[72] Baynard Kendrick, *Florida Trails to Turnpikes, 1914-1964* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), 9, for a discussion of the seal.

[73] MDT, 10 Oct. 1916.

[74] Kendrick, 41.

[75] MDT, 29 Jul. 1919.

[76] Florida State Road Department, "Florida Road Condition Map," 1923, reproduced as the frontispiece to Kendrick, *Florida Trails to Turnpikes* (1964).

recognized the portion of the Tamiami Trail between Fort Myers to Miami as "State Road 27" and provided the first financial assistance by charging the state highway engineer with "a survey of the Tamiami Trail from Miami to Marco Junction."[77] Two years later, the state legislature deemed the State Road 27 a "great benefit, not only to the southern part of the State, but to the whole of Florida" and placed it within Florida's "Preferential System."[78] This designation not only "made its construction the obligation of the State," it allowed the direct application of federal monies made available through the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1921.[79] The state rapidly completed construction and the Tamiami Trail was officially opened with many celebrations and a motorcade between Tampa and Miami on 25-27 April 1928.[80]

Private Interests in the Tamiami Trail and the Formation of (Barron) Collier County
Without the initial motivation and sustained resources of private interests, the Tamiami Trail would not have progressed to completion as quickly as it did. James Franklin Jaudon was a key player in the development and construction of the Tamiami Trail from its earliest conception through its dedication. Jaudon moved from Orlando to Miami with his brother in 1895, the year before the arrival of Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad and the city's incorporation; they hoped to operate a mercantile business.[81] Jaudon prospered with a successful military career, far-ranging business investments, real estate, and Dade County positions. In April 1915, at an "informal meeting" in Tallahassee, he and Francis W. Perry, then president of the Fort Myers chamber of commerce, devised the "Cross-State Highway" concept that became the Tamiami Trail.[82] Jaudon's involvement went well beyond boosterism and armchair planning. He was a member of the original team who, during the summer of 1915, surveyed an approximate route for the Trail through the Everglades.

While the Everglades portion of the new roadway required serious survey and trailblazing, most of the counties through which the planned road would travel were able to quickly work out the best route and begin issuing bonds financing and opening bids for construction. As completed the Tamiami Trail extended 273 miles between Tamp and Miami and passed through seven counties: Hillsborough, for thirty-one miles or 11.4 percent; Manatee for eighteen miles or 6.6

[77] MDT, 27 Apr. 1923.

[78] MDT, 6 Jul. 1926.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Baynard Kendrick notes that the dedication did not coincide with completion, stating: "although the opening celebration took place in May, 1928, the last ten-mile stretch [from Estero south to Naples] was not finally completed until almost eighteen months later" (87).

[81] Gail Clement, Florida International University, "Everglades Biographies: James Franklin Jaudon," accessed online, 7 May 2007, http://everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim/bios/jaudon.htm. This biography and others are companion resources for an online exhibit entitled "Reclaiming the Everglades: South Florida's Natural History, 1884-1934," located at "American Memory" on the Library of Congress website (www.loc.gov).

[82] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 6-7.

percent; Sarasota for forty-seven miles or 17.2 percent; Charlotte for twenty-four miles or 8.8 percent; Lee for thirty-four miles or 12.4 percent; Collier for seventy-six miles or 28.0 percent; and Dade for forty-three miles or 15.6 percent.[83] While undoubtedly a major expense, most of the stretches in coastal counties were in areas populated enough to afford the cost. At the onset of construction, Lee County included what in only a few years became Collier County; the planned route placed forty percent of the Tamiami Trail within Lee County. To make matters even more problematic, Lee County was only sparsely settled south of Fort Myers and mostly undeveloped backcountry on its interior. The *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928) explained the end result of this situation:

> In 1919, it became evident that Lee County would not be able tot complete its link of the Trail for financial reasons. The mileage in that county was 121, more than twice the mileage in Dade, and with less improved land and assessable values upon which to levy taxes.[84]

As Miami boosters, landowners, and developers were particularly keen about having another road route into the city, it should come as no surprise that James Franklin Jaudon became actively involved with devising a solution for beleaguered Lee County. In 1917, Jaudon formed the Chevelier Corporation, which subsequently purchased significant acreage in northern Monroe County not far to the south of the anticipated path of the Tamiami Trail. The owners of the Chevelier saw an opportunity in Lee County's shortfall, outlined in a March 1921 communication from the company to the Board of County Commissioners of Dade County: "The Chevelier Corporation owns a large tract of land in the northern part of Monroe County, immediately south of Lee County and west of Dade County, through which they desire to construct, at their own expense, a hard surfaced road."[85] At this point in the saga, any solution to the situation was likely viewed as advantageous and as early as 1919 it seems that the commissioners for Dade, Lee, and Monroe counties were inclined to support Jaudon and the Chevelier Corporation's scheme for completion.[86]

Although business leaders comprehended the value of the Trail to their enterprises, the public's enthusiasm seemed to be on the wane. To reinstate public awareness and support, Russell Kay, a South Florida newspaperman, coordinated a "Trail Blazing Motorcade" between Fort Myers and

[83] Map of the Tamiami Trail, *Collier County News* (Everglades City), special souvenir edition celebrating the opening of the Tamiami Trail, 26 Apr. 1928, 1, Vertical File Folder—Tamiami Trail, HMSF, for mileage.

[84] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 17.

[85] Chevelier Corporation to the Board of County Commissions of Dade County, Mar. 1921, Box 2-1, Jaudon, HMSF.

[86] "Moves to Change Routing of Trail Sharply Attacked," untitled and undated newspaper clipping, ca. 1925-27, in Box 13, Jaudon, HMSF.

Miami in 1923.[87] The *Dearborn Independent (Ford International Weekly)* reported the goals of the expedition in January 1924: "determine...if it were possible, to reach Miami over the approximate route of the Tamiami Trail, to explore the intervening country, note the obstacles to be encountered, log the distance across and publish the information gleaned on the trip."[88] Although they zigzagged from hammock to hammock back and forth across the original survey line and arrived with fewer automobiles than they had at the beginning, the Trailblazers showed that crossing was possible and vitally brought the issue back into the forefront of public imagination.[89]

At the same moment that the Chevelier Corporation was positioning itself and gathering support for rerouting a section of the Tamiami Trail in eastern Lee County southward to Monroe County, another savvy entrepreneur was formulating a plan of his own. By 1900, Barron Gift Collier had moved to New York from his hometown of Memphis and in his late 20s had already "amassed his first million by selling advertising card franchises to the nation's trolley, train and subway lines."[90] Collier ultimately "became the head of a firm which not only controlled the advertising space above the straphangers' heads [on subway cars] but also 230 newsstands in the Interborough and B. M. T. stations" and his Consolidated Street Railway Advertising Company had operations in seventy American cities, Canada, and Cuba.[91] Collier's fortune was based on this core business core, but like most capitalists of the age he ultimately held interests in an array of money-making ventures. He first traveled to Florida in 1911 and, apparently charmed by its climate no less by its booming real estate market, soon began purchasing property. In his history of Collier County, Charlton Tebeau recounted that Collier:

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[87] Stephen Jackson, "A Guide to the Russell Kay Papers," University of Florida Smathers Libraries, Special and Area Studies Collections, Gainesville, Florida, Jul. 2006, accessed online, 11 May 2007, http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/kay.htm; A. H. Andrews, "Blazing the Tamiami Trail Across Florida: How an Adventurous Motorcade Plunged through a No-man's Land," *The Dearborn Independent* 2 Feb. 1924: 10. Original in Richter Library, University of Miami. Coral Gables, Florida. Item available online at Library of Congress, American Memory, "Reclaiming the Everglades," http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/everglades/.

[88] Andrews, 10. For more information, see: Steve Glassman, "Blazing the Tamiami Trail," *South Florida History Magazine* 1 (Winter 1989): 3-5, 12-13; Baynard Kendrick, *Florida Trails to Turnpike, 1914-1964* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), 72-73+; "Tamiami Trail," *Florida Highways* 10 (Dec. 1941): 8-9+; and documents in the Russell Kay Papers, University of Florida Smathers Libraries, Special and Area Studies Collections, Gainesville, Florida, folder 3 "Clippings," and folder 6 "Motorcade Across the Everglades, 1923."

[89] Carrie Scupholm also observes that impact of the Trail Blazers also made the Tamiami Trail "the most discussed highway project in America" (78).

[90] Gail Clement, Florida International University, "Everglades Biographies: Barron Gift Collier," accessed online, 9 May 2007, http://everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim/bios/jaudon.htm. This biography and others are companion resources for an online exhibit entitled "Reclaiming the Everglades: South Florida's Natural History, 1884-1934," located at "American Memory" on the Library of Congress website (www.loc.gov).

[91] "Barron Collier Dies Suddenly, 65," *New York Times* 14 Mar. 1939: 21, for quote, and Clement, "Barron Gift Collier."

> made his first purchase of what was to be Collier County in 1921 when he acquired Deep Lake Hammock and the grove that Roach and Langford had planted there early in the century. This included the fourteen-mile Deep Lake Railroad down to the river at Everglades. In the next two years, he quietly bought up land in large tracts from land and timber companies, from the State and from local residents who had homesteaded, pre-empted or purchased it. His holdings reached over nine hundred thousands acres in what became Collier County.[92]

Barron Collier was a relative latecomer to the Florida real estate and development frenzy thrown into motion and initially sustained by Henry Flagler's groundbreaking activities with the serial southward development of Atlantic coast resorts along his Florida East Coast Railroad. Flagler cofounded Standard Oil with David Rockefeller and was a millionaire many, many times over when he turned his attention to the investment potential of Florida's thinly settled east coast. Beginning with St. Augustine's Ponce de León Hotel, completed in 1888, Flagler and his railroad reached Miami in only eight years opening up such places as Daytona Beach for tourism and founding posh Palm Beach and nearby West Palm Beach and Lake Worth in the move south.[93] Regarding these events, Edward Akin, one of Flagler's biographers, observed:

> Florida's east coast was the American counterpart to the European Riviera by World War I…[and] Flagler had a major impact on the development…Few men of his era would have undertaken so great a task. Although it is possible that the area could have capitalized on its climate and geography without Flagler, it is highly improbable that it could have developed as rapidly as it did.[94]

The vision and capital held by Flagler and other capitalists—most notably Henry Plant, his railroad and resort-building counterpart on Florida's west coast—gave them significant power throughout the state. A majority of rich and well-connected men of Flagler's generation "simply never understood or accepted the notion of conflict of interest"—they freely mixed business, politics, and civic activities believing firmly that their personally profitable endeavors were also

[92] Tebeau, 85.

[93] Flagler's imagination and drive did not stop in Miami; in 1912, he completed a railway link to Key West, much of it over open water. His and exploits in Florida have been the topic of much scrutiny and praise in numerous books. For more information, see such works as: David Leon Chandler, *Henry Flagler: The Astonishing Life and Times of the Visionary Robber Baron Who Founded Florida* (New York: Macmillan, 1986); Edward N. Akin, *Flagler: Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992); S. Walter Martin, *Henry Flagler: Visionary of the Gilded Age* (Lake Buena Vista, FL: Tailored Tours Publications, 1998); Susan R. Braden, *The Architecture of Leisure: The Florida Resort Hotels of Henry Flagler and Henry Plant* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002); Les Standiford, *Last Train to Paradise: Henry Flagler and the Spectacular Rise and Fall of the Railroad That Crossed the Ocean* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2002); Thomas Graham, *Flagler's St. Augustine Hotels: The Ponce de León. the Alcazar, and the Casa Monica* (Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, 2004).

[94] Edward N. Akin, *Flagler: Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992), 172, 232.

good for the country and its economy as a whole.[95] Although younger than Flagler, Barron Collier was molded by the same Gilded Age sentiments that would remain unchallenged until the Great Depression. Flagler was an icon in his own day and Collier very likely viewed his south Florida land acquisitions and unfolding plans for development as a logical extension of Henry Flagler's monumental accomplishments. Despite the presence of other active entrepreneurs in South Florida—James Franklin Jaudon and Carl Fisher, among others—Collier may well have had the goal to become *the* latter-day Flagler in Florida's modern lore. Like Flager before him, Collier was not content to be a passive landowner and sought to control as many of the variables impacting his vast real estate empire as possible.

At a time when the completion of the Tamiami Trail through the Everglades remained uncertain, the Florida state legislature partitioned Collier County from Lee County in 1923 in large part because Barron Collier pledged to complete that portion of the roadway. With control of Lee County almost wholly centered on the Fort Myers area, even before Collier entered the scene there was a great deal of dissatisfaction among residents to the south along the coast and on the interior, in particular about the lack or pitiful state of the roads.[96] Collier used this existing sentiment to his advantage. He generated enough support to quietly drive a bill through the state legislature creating "Collier County," of which he owned almost seventy percent, and situating its seat at remote Everglades City, which was the business center of his Florida operations. Though underdeveloped, Collier's virtual fiefdom was not wholly welcomed. An April 1923 telegram that conveyed extreme dismay about a Lee County representative's vote in favor of Collier County's formation also observed that many residents of the new county:

> realize [the] incalculable danger of placing the welfare of their communities and the priceless rights and opportunities of their children in a position where they would be subject to the autocratic whims and fancies of one man[,] benevolent though he might be[,] and more especially a man who can be proven by affidavits to have said that 'if he could not name the county officials he did not want any county.'[97]

At least through the onset of the Great Depression, the interests of Barron Gift Collier, the Collier Company, and Collier County were inseparable. Collier sought to build-up Everglades City and present it as the next great resort town in South Florida. In addition to building an elegant county courthouse and train station, establishing a bank, and even creating a streetcar

[95] David Cannadine, *Mellon: An American Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 603, for quote specific to Andrew Mellon, and Akin, 232, for a similar assessment of Flagler.

[96] Tebeau, 208.

[97] Western Union Telegram to W. O. Sheppard, Tallahassee, from unknown sender, 19 Apr. 1923, Jaudon. Item available online at Library of Congress, American Memory, "Reclaiming the Everglades," http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/everglades/.

line, Collier showed confidence in "a rosy future for the town" led to the widening the streets into palm-lined boulevards converging on a large traffic circle.[98]

In the end, Collier's accomplishments never reached the extent of Henry Flagler's, a stunted legacy resulting from both geography and timing. Flagler's success depended on turning the enticing Florida east coast into a winter playground for wealthy northerners. In contrast, much of Collier County was on the interior and covered by cypress swamp—the best Barron Collier could hope for was intensive agricultural reclamation and settlement. Unfortunately, any funds for additional road building and the enactment of large-scale drainage schemes began disappearing with the passing of the South Florida real estate and development boom after 1925 before drying up completely during the Great Depression. As one of an important group of early-twentieth-century visionaries in Florida, Barron Gift Collier's place in the state's history deserves greater attention and scrutiny. Although Collier's motivations were probably consciously or unconsciously modeled on Flagler before him, an historical assessment of Collier and growth of his county will be far more satisfyingly founded on its own merits and idiosyncrasies than on direct comparison with the history and development of Florida's east coast counties.

Competing Developers and the Two Branches of the Tamiami Trail

Barron Gift Collier's drive for control and dominance quickly brought him into conflict with James Franklin Jaudon and the Chevelier Corporation busily working on the new route of the Tamiami Trail backed by Dade, Lee, and Monroe Counties. This conflict is more than anecdotal as it pitted developer against developer, native Floridian against northern capitalists at the apex of the 1920s Florida land boom—both claiming to have the best interests of the region as their primary motivator. The clash between the Collier and Jaudon interests not only gave "Monroe" Station its name, but also a site at one of the most important intersections of along the Tamiami Trail at the time of its completion.

For four years prior to Collier County's creation, the Chevelier Corporation had the backing of Dade, Lee, and Monroe Counties to shift the route to the south, through their holdings, in order restart work to finish the Tamiami Trail. In time, they completed approximately seventeen miles of roadway from the extreme west of Dade County across the northeast corner of Monroe County, before turning northward into Collier County in order to join the Tamiami Trail as

[98] John Durant, "The Saga of a Florida 'Ghost Town'," *New York Times* 15 Dec. 1963: 315. The gray areas between Collier's business dealings and the county's remained a common complaint throughout the 1920s, particularly among residents on the east coast distant from Everglades City. A Mar. 1929 letter from a Naples business owner to then Governor Doyle E. Carlton stated: "Up to the present time all roads which have been built in the County have been built where they would benefit Mr. Collier's interests; none have been constructed where any one else would be benefited, even where roads were needed...For example, I am informed that the streets in Everglades are being built with County funds." W. H. Surrency to Honorable Doyle E. Carlton, 21 Mar. 1929, Governor Doyle E. Carlton Records, 1929-1932, Record Group 102, Series 204, Administrative Correspondence, Box 16.

initially surveyed.[99] Like Collier with Everglades City, they had established a hamlet called "Pinecrest" along the road to aid in their land and development scheme, which by 1926 or 1927 could be described as having: "a boulevard highway where the Tamiami trail runs through it...a hotel, sawmill, public school, filling station and store as well as the mess shack, bunk house, machine shop and other buildings of the Chevelier corporation."[100] Jaudon understood that his fortunes in Monroe County would prosper with Pinecrest's as the Tamiami Trail funneled traffic through it; similarly, once he succeeded in founding Collier County, Barron Collier wanted to keep motorists in Collier County as much as possible to aid in his grand plans.

The ante for being named the "official route" of the Tamiami Trail was upped with state recognition of the Tamiami Trail as State Road 27, making it eligible for state and federal funding. The argument very publicly raged through 1926 in newspapers and meetings. One Dade County paper expressed exasperation with the situation, feeling that it the situation was ludicrous and commenting:

> If each [of the two companies] turned its equipment toward each other, each would have but four miles of roadway to build, at the rate of approximately one mile a month, as they have been making, and by September 1 this important and long-talked-of Tamiami trail could be opened...Yet the forces of the northern route [Collier] say that they will continue to build eastward to Dade county before turning south on a connecting link, and will parallel the southern road instead of meeting it. The result can only be that one of the costliest roads ever built in the state will overlap for 14 or 15 miles, and still will not be connected until rival counties and rival private interests have completed with projects.[101]

In the end, the state could not ignore the amount of capital that each party invested in the road. Chroniclers of the roadway in the *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928) recounted:

> the Collier County route was [ultimately] adopted by the State road Department and the Monroe County link was accepted as the 'South Loop' of the Tamiami Trail by the State Road Department. This explains why parallel lines of road were built for a distance of about 20 miles.[102]

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[99] "South Branch of Trail Due to Chevelier: Miami Firm Connected Loose Ends at Own Expense," untitled and undated newspaper clipping, ca. 1926-28, in Charlton W. Tebeau, "Tamiami Trail Scrapbook" (1920s-1939, bulk 1926-28), HMSF, for total miles.

[100] Ibid.

[101] "Tamiami Trail Truths," *Miami Daily News* 6 May 1926, clipping in Box 13, Jaudon, HMSF. This box contains a number of newspaper articles detailing the drama over the route.

[102] *History of the Tamiami Trail* (1928), 19.

They even went on to suggest that even though the State Road Department completed and would have to maintain what to some thought was redundant roadway, it was actually a good deal for Florida: "it worked out that the State secured both roads at less than the cost of one and as they are seven miles apart, both are needed to open up the agricultural areas in the two Counties."[103]

From Monroe Station, the Loop Road extends due south from the Tamiami Trail and does not turn eastward toward Dade County until it passes well into northern Monroe County. The significance of the intersection of these two roadways has been lost to present-day travelers along the Trail. In addition to being an important remnant of original roadside architecture along the highway, Monroe Station's site is also testament to the dreams and conflicts of two of South Florida's legendary developers during a particularly frenzied period for Florida real estate that would not be matched again until after World War II. This period "resulted in a dramatic shifting of the state's population centers and the identification of Florida as a place of speed, glamour, fashion, and celebrities"—the Tamiami Trail and its remaining two remaining stations are touchstones to this heady epoch in the state's history.[104]

Monroe Station: A (Possibly) Unique Roadside Type

As designed and constructed in 1928, Monroe Station was a multipurpose building, a type unto itself that flexibly accommodated the functions of a police patrol station, commercial establishment, family residence, and motorist rest stop with restroom facilities. As completed, its modest, even homey, appearance made no visual suggestion of its vital importance to the newly completed highway. While the now-famed streamlined filling stations devised by industrial designers—Walter Dorwin Teague's Texaco stations being among the most celebrated—were still a few years off, the 1920s had been a period of standardization and beautification of gas franchises licensed by the major American oil companies. They advocated a trend for standardization in order to better brand their product and, at a time with variable fuel quality, make it easy for passing motorists to quickly identify a reliable fuel emporium.[105] As for

[103] Ibid. Period Florida State Road Department road maps show that the status of the "South Loop" never recovered from the decision to back Collier County's claim on the official route. A 1929 map did not represent the South Loop at all while a 1936 map depicted both as "State Highway 27," but only the northern route was designated "U. S. Highway 94." See: State Road Department, *Florida State System of Roads* (1929) and *Official Road Map of Florida* (1936). By the late 1940s, the future of what had become "State Road 94" was becoming clearer. In 1948, the Road Department responded to a appeal by the State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission to close the road "during the period of high water," not necessarily for the safety of motorists but "for the protection of wild life seeking refuge on the fill" (MDT, 14 Oct. 1948). A current National Park Service map of Big Cypress National Preserve represents the first third of the Loop Road—extending westward from its Dade County intersection with the Tamiami Trail (at "Fortymile Bend")—as "State Road 94." This portion of the road is paved through the remnants of Jaudon's Pinecrest up to the Loop Road Education Center at Tamarind Hammock. Beyond this point, the road is unpaved and labeled as "scenic drive."

[104] Gary R. Mormino, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 45.

[105] For more on the history of gas stations, see: John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, The Gas Station in America (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), and Michael Karl Witzel, The American Gas Station (Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International, 1992).

beautification, city neighborhoods were concerned with the blight and danger of curbside pumps and utilitarian buildings conspicuously out of place in established residential or commercial areas, and rural areas feared the loss its inherent anti-urban character, mainly because of the proliferation of signs to attract motorists.[106] Histories of roadside America and gas stations mainly focus on these buildings and associated contexts when considering the 1920s; the form and larger purposes of Monroe Station had very little to do with these developments.

As a building type, Monroe Station was essentially a country general store with a gas pump, and represented an earlier age of fuel marketing and sales. Well before oil companies began using filling station architecture as a merchandising approach, "visible register" pumps—with glass tanks on top to allow the consumer to see the gasoline before it passes into the car—were frequently topped by round and spherical glass signs bearing the company logo.
It is not known who designed the stations for the Collier Company or what inspired the tall and narrow, hip-roofed building, which bears many similarities in size and profile to railroad signal towers constructed around the same time.

Over time, Monroe Station became even more of an attraction and motorist stopping point at odds with the corporate standardization for roadside buildings that became universal in the decades following World War II.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Monroe Station is an increasingly rare example of vernacular roadside architecture dating from the first-generation of American automobile highway construction. The flat-roofed canopy over the driveway has long since disappeared and the ridge of the gable-roofed, rear addition peeks over the low-pitched hip roof of the original two-story building at the front, but the earliest manifestation of the station can still be from the Tamiami Trail. As is the case with many vernacular buildings, Monroe Station has been expanded and altered on an "as needed" basis over time, meeting new functional requirements or suiting changing owners and tastes. Its frame construction and cladding has

[106] Daniel J. Bluestone, "Roadside Blight and the Reform of Commercial Architecture," in *Roadside America: The Automobile in Design and Culture*, ed. Jan Jennings (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press for the Society for Commercial Archeology, 1990), 171-73, for rural concerns.

made the addition and subtraction of extensions an easy proposition over time and the entire ensemble is a textbook case of accretive construction.

2. Condition of fabric: Poor.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:

2. Foundations:

3. Walls:

4. Structural systems, framing:

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:
b. Windows:

6. Roof:

C. Description of Interior:

1. Plan:

2. Flooring:

3. Wall and ceiling finish:

4. Doorways and doors:

5. Trim and woodwork:

6. Mechanical:

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PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was co-sponsored by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Historic Preservation Training Center, and Big Cypress National Preserve, all of the National Park Service. The documentation of Monroe Station was undertaken by HABS, Richard O'Connor, Acting Manager of Heritage Documentation Programs, under the direction of Catherine C.

Lavoie, Acting Chief of HABS. The project leader was HABS architect Mark Schara. HABS architects Paul Davidson, Jason McNatt, and Mark Schara produced the measured drawings and HABS historian James A. Jacobs produced the history during the winter/spring 2007.